



**American Orthotic &  
Prosthetic Association**

# AOPA in Advance

Breaking News for O&P Professionals

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### Newsletter Feedback

We invite your comments and questions. Please contact Steven Rybicki at [srybicki@AOPAnet.org](mailto:srybicki@AOPAnet.org) or (571) 431-0835.

## Featured Supplier Plus Partner of the Week:

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## O&P NEWS

### UPDATE: AOPA Submits Testimony to Meeting of Texas HHS Opposing Medicaid Cuts

As reported in the June 14 and June 28 issues of A/A, **AOPA** been alerted to another threat to cut Medicaid payments to O&P, this time in Texas. The Texas Health and Human Services Commission regarding the rate holds hearings July 12 to consider the issue of reimbursement a cut of 12.5% cut to O&P in the state's Medicaid budget over fiscal years 2011 and 2012. **AOPA** has submitted an official statement to the hearing. The statement emphasizes that this type of cut harms the near-term fiscal health of the state: "Anyone who understands the realities of health care in the U.S. realizes that states cannot simply "cost shift" budget dollars to providers without detrimental results, e.g., showing up in emergency rooms, adding to the uncompensated care burdens for hospitals and physicians."

[Click here to read the entire statement AOPA has submitted to the Texas HHS Commission.](#)

**AOPA** has been providing support to the Texas Orthotic and Prosthetic Association (TOPA), crafting an ad for placement in newspapers and is distributing a letter to O&P patient care providers in the state to alert them to the Medicaid cuts and how to register their opposition to the cuts with their state representatives.

[Click here to see the ad.](#)

[Click here to read portions of the Texas Budget Conference Committee Report relevant to O&P.](#)

[Click here to access and search the entire Texas Budget Conference Committee Report.](#)

**AOPA** will continue to update members about the status of the O&P cuts in Texas. **AOPA** also encourages you to view **AOPA** and the Amputee Coalition's 30-second television commercial defending O&P from Medicaid cuts. The commercial is hosted online at <http://www.LimbsAreEssential.org> and **AOPA** has created a "Take Action" advocacy page where anyone who wants to support O&P may send a letter to their state and federal legislators, urging them to join the fight to protect these vulnerable citizens with mobility impairments.

[Click here to view the LimbsAreEssential.org site and the PSA.](#)

And **AOPA** wants to remind members that they are encouraged to recommend the [LimbsAreEssential.org](#) site patients, colleagues, or friends who are angered by irresponsible Medicaid cuts..

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at [srybicki@AOPAnet.org](mailto:srybicki@AOPAnet.org) or (571) 431-0835.

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### O&P Alliance Partners with Disability Organizations for Congressional Briefing

On Thursday, June 23 the O&P Alliance participated in a Congressional Briefing that sought to educate staff of House and Senate legislators about the importance of covering rehabilitative and habilitative care within the "essential health benefits." The briefing, "The Importance of Rehabilitation in

America's Healthcare System" was attended by Rep. Jim Langevin (D-RI), Co-Chair of the House Bipartisan Disabilities Caucus and approximately 100 Congressional staffers heard an expert panel discuss rehabilitative and habilitative services. The panel included:

- **Gerard Francisco, MD, Chief Medical Officer, TIRR Memorial Hermann Chairman of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and Brian Injury Fellowship Director, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston:**

Dr. Francisco is the attending rehabilitation physician for Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords and spoke about the value of rehabilitation services and therapies.

- **Paul Tobin, President and CEO, United Spinal Association:**

Mr. Tobin is a U.S. Navy veteran and explained the unique rehabilitation and assistive technology needs of veterans and others.

- **Jeanne Wilcox, PhD, Professor of Speech and Hearing Science, ASU Director and Founder, Infant Child Research Programs, Arizona State University:**

Dr. Wilcox explained the importance of habilitation services for children with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

Peter Thomas, Esq., who is general counsel for the O&P Alliance moderated the panel and also contributed his own first-person insights and expertise on the topic of rehabilitative care.

[Click here to see Peter Thomas introducing Rep. Langevin.](#)

[Click here to see Rep. Langevin addressing the Briefing.](#)

[Click here to see Dr. Gerard Francisco presenting.](#)

[Click here to see Paul Tobin presenting.](#)

[Click here to see Dr. Jeanne Wilcox presenting.](#)

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at [srybicki@AOPAnet.org](mailto:srybicki@AOPAnet.org) or (571) 431-0835.

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## **Manufacturers' Coding Workshop: What You Don't Know about Coding Can Hurt You!**

Join **AOPA** and hear representatives from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) discuss current coding issues and learn the ins-and-outs of coding applications, as well as hints on coding success, from speakers experienced in coding issues. If you are interested in joining this executive level group and learning how to obtain an L Code; assuring that O&P providers will be paid for new products; and helping to make sure that reimbursements for your existing products are up-to-date and current with CMS policies and with amounts legitimately being reimbursed for comparable products then make plans to join **AOPA** from 8:30 AM to 3:45 PM in Baltimore on Thursday, July 21. The workshop will help you be able to answer these questions and more:

- How does coding affect product sales?
- When in the product lifecycle should you consider coding?
- Does the name of a device affect payment?
- Who makes the final decision on what devices receive codes?
- Can you get a brand name code?
- Do Medicare codes affect private payers?
- What do I do if my code application is rejected?

**AOPA** has negotiated the incredible room rate of \$109 per night at the Doubletree by Hilton Baltimore BWI Hotel. Make your room reservation today by calling (410) 859-8400. Space is limited and this room rate won't last long. **AOPA** has secured a limited number of rooms at this rate. space is limited

so be sure book your room today, but no later than June 29 when any remaining rooms in the block will be released.

[Click here to register for the Manufacturers' Coding Workshop.](#)

Questions? Contact Stephen Custer at [scuster@AOPAnet.org](mailto:scuster@AOPAnet.org) (571) 431-0876.

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## **AOPA offers One-Month-Only Discount on Online AOPA Bookstore Purchases**

As a way of introducing the new platform **AOPA** has developed for its online bookstore, we are extending a special offer for all **AOPA** members. For the month of July, take 10% off all purchases made using the new online **AOPA** bookstore. Discount applies to all educational and coding items, as well as our monthly audio conferences, purchased online.

[Click here to visit AOPA's brand new online bookstore.](#)

If you've been waiting for the perfect time to stock your office's library, now is it! To receive the discount you will need your membership number, zip code, and you must also enter **HOT** as the promotional code at checkout.

Questions? Contact Michael Chapman at [mchapman@AOPAnet.org](mailto:mchapman@AOPAnet.org) or (571) 431-0843.

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## **AOPA Welcomes Stephen Custer to the Team**

**AOPA** announces the addition of Steve Custer as its new Membership, Meetings, and Operations Coordinator. Stephen assumes the portfolio of responsibilities handled previously by Ann Davis and brings significant coordinating experience from his prior positions at Lockheed-Martin Company approving defense grants and before that as a fraud analyst with Opus Capital Market Consultants. While masquerading in the office by day, he is also a live stage actor by night.

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## **Announcing AOPAversity's O&P Business Management Certificate**

**AOPA** is proud to announce the formation of a new Business Certificate program. The **AOPAversity** O&P Business Management Certificate is a comprehensive certificate program and will offer a series of business and management seminars (12 Modules) that will provide business owners, managers and practitioners of O&P practices, O&P Manufacturers and Distributors an opportunity to explore crucial business challenges - from finance, sales and marketing to business operations and management. The **AOPA** Business Management Certificate Program will be similar to non-degree continuing education programs that universities offer in conjunction with their business colleges. These programs will be offered at the **AOPA** Assembly, Online at **AOPA's** Website and targeted seminars throughout the country (such as the Coding Seminar). The **AOPA** Business Certificate Program addresses skills that are fundamental to the success of an O&P business. This unique leadership learning experience will provide business owners and their employees an opportunity to experience fresh insights, new tools and proven techniques as a pathway for developing better business practices, in addition to creating ongoing returns for your company.

The **AOPA** Business Certificate Program will focus on four subject areas: Management, Sales and Marketing, Finance and Operations, with designated required and elective Modules within each of the four subject areas. The participants of the program will receive a certificate of completion once they have completed eight of the Business Program Modules and passed a Module specific quiz.

Don't miss the opportunity to be the first to participate in **AOPA's** new Business Certificate Program.

...continue the opportunity to be the first to participate in AOPA's new Business Certificate Program. Take the first step in earning your business certificate by attending the extensive 2-hour course "Financial Management Profitability Tools- Using Cost Accounting to Maximize Your Practice's Profitability" at the **AOPA** National Assembly. Benefits to attending this course at the Assembly include:

- No extra charge for Assembly attendees
- Free comprehensive workbook
- Your first step in earning a certificate in O&P Business Management
- Learn to develop an operations and financial budget
- Learn to determine the financial impact of a proposed discount
- Learn to create payer presentation strategies
- Learn what operational strategies you should consider
- And much more!

For further information, contact Tina Moran at (571) 431-0808 or [tmoran@AOPAnet.org](mailto:tmoran@AOPAnet.org).

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## Register for AOPA's August 10 Audio Conference, "How to Get Paid for Miscellaneous and Repair Codes"

Whoever said you can't get paid for miscellaneous codes is not trying hard enough. While securing reimbursement for miscellaneous and repair codes can often be difficult, providing the right information can help you to obtain reimbursement that you deserve. Join **AOPA** on August 10, 2011 for an **AOPA**versity Mastering Medicare Audio Conference that will help you to learn strategies for obtaining reimbursement for miscellaneous codes and repairs. Attendees will learn the following:

- How to maximize the use of the electronic narrative field
- How to provide proper documentation to support your claim
- When to use miscellaneous codes instead of repair codes
- How to differentiate "minor" parts from labor
- How to deal with requests for invoices

The cost of participating is \$99 per line for **AOPA** members (\$199 for nonmembers) and any number of employees may listen on a given line. Listeners can earn 1.5 continuing education credits by returning the provided quiz within 30 days and scoring at least 80 percent. Contact Devon Bernard at [dbernard@AOPAnet.org](mailto:dbernard@AOPAnet.org) or (571) 431-0854 with content questions.

[Click here to register online.](#)

Questions? Contact Stephen Custer at [scuster@AOPAnet.org](mailto:scuster@AOPAnet.org) (571) 431-0876.

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## Announcing AOPA's Final Coding & Billing Seminar of 2011: October 24-25 in Baltimore

Don't miss out on the third and final Coding & Billing seminar of 2011 on October 24-25 at the [Sheraton Inner Harbor](#) in Baltimore, Maryland. Be sure to register early and take advantage of the early bird registration savings and the special low room rate of \$159 per night.

At this seminar, **AOPA** experts will provide the most up-to-date information to help O&P practitioners and office billing staff learn how to code complex devices, including repairs and adjustments, through interactive discussions with **AOPA** experts and your colleagues and much more. This two day event will feature break-out sessions for both practitioners and office staff.

**In the breakout session Practitioners will cover:**

- General Coding Principles
- "Hands on" coding of specific devices
- Proper coding for repairs and adjustments
- Reimbursement for unlisted codes
- Codes that are mutually exclusive and should not be billed together

**In the breakout session Administrators will cover:**

- Updated Quality and Supplier Standards
- Strategies for handling appeals and denials
- How to handle unique billing situations
- Documentation Requirements
- Medicare as Secondary Payer

[Click here to register for the Baltimore Coding & Billing Seminar.](#)

[Click here to reserve your room at the Sheraton Inner Harbor and take advantage of the low Coding & Billing Seminar rate of \\$159 per night or call \(410\) 962-8300. Be sure to mention the AOPA Seminar to receive the \\$159 per night rate.](#)

Questions? Contact Stephen Custer at [scuster@AOPAnet.org](mailto:scuster@AOPAnet.org) (571) 431-0876.

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## 2011 National Assembly News: Donations Needed for the AOPA Wine Tasting and Auction

For the fourth year, **AOPA** is hosting a wine tasting and auction to benefit **AOPA's** Government Relations outreach. Quickly becoming one of the most anticipated Assembly events, the auction offers a chance to learn about and taste a variety of wines, including some made by your fellow members. Donations for auction are now being accepted.

We look forward to seeing you Tuesday, September 20, from 6:30 - 8:00 PM for a friendly bidding war or two!

[Click here to access the Wine Donation Form.](#)

We would like to thank the following individuals who have already donated to the Wine Tasting & Auction:

- Thomas DiBello, CO, FAAOP & Leslie DiBello
- Dave Edwards, CPO, FAAOP & Kathy Edwards, CFm
- Rick Fleetwood
- Richard Gingras, CPO, BOCOP & Marbee Gingras
- James Kaiser, CP & Dianne Kaiser
- Anita Liberman-Lampear, MA & Alan Lampear
- Jon Leimkuehler, CPO, FAAOP & Ellen Leimkuehler
- Claudia Zacharias, MBA, CAE

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at [srybicki@AOPAnet.org](mailto:srybicki@AOPAnet.org) or (571) 431-0835.

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## 2011 National Assembly: General Registration Information for the Place to Be

The **AOPA** National Assembly is "The Place to Be" September 19-22 for an O&P meeting experience like no other-win great prizes, attend interactive education programs, participate in roundtable discussions, take part in fun events, earn CE credits and learn at hands-on workshops.



[Click here to access the Preliminary Program.](#)

[Click here to register online.](#)

**AOPA** has negotiated the incredible room rate of \$135 per night at the Mirage Resort in Las Vegas. Make your room reservation today by calling (800) 627-6667. Book your room today as this great room rate won't last long. Hotel reservation cut off is August 4 at this rate.

Questions? Call **AOPA** at (571) 431-0876 or email [assembly@AOPAnet.org](mailto:assembly@AOPAnet.org) or visit [www.AOPAnet.org](http://www.AOPAnet.org).

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## 2011 National Assembly: A Call for Poster Presentations

Present your research findings or a particular case study via a poster presentation at the 2011 **AOPA** National Assembly, September 19-22, Las Vegas. Poster presentations should be a graphical display in a poster format using photographs, diagrams, flowcharts and graphs and any sample educational materials. Applications for poster presentations will be accepted through July 2011.

[Click here to submit a poster presentation.](#)

For further information, contact Tina Moran at (571) 431-0808 or [tmoran@AOPAnet.org](mailto:tmoran@AOPAnet.org)

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## 2011 National Assembly: The 2011 Fall Thranhardt Golf Classic

Missed your invitation to play in the British Open? Not to worry. On Monday, September 19 you can still play 18 of the best holes from 11 different British Open rotation courses, including two holes from this year's British Open. Better still, they are all on one golf course located less than 9 miles from the heart of the Las Vegas Strip. This is not your typical round of golf. You will play at the Royal Links Golf Club in Las Vegas, NV, and whether you are into the history of the game or just want a shot at Tiger Woods' course record of 67 (Feb., 2001), Royal Links and your O&P friends will provide you with some great golfing memories.

The tournament will be held in conjunction with the **AOPA** National Assembly and will benefit two Great Causes and one great course make it not just golf, but a golf experience. For the third year in a row AOPA's Capitol Connection and OPAF have joined forces to co-sponsor this great event to benefit the inspiring efforts of OPAF and the legislative, research and education efforts of the Capitol Connection to further the O&P policy agenda.

[Click here to register for the 2011 Fall Thranhardt Golf Classic.](#)

For further information, contact Tina Moran at (571) 431-0808 or [tmoran@AOPAnet.org](mailto:tmoran@AOPAnet.org).

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## O&P RESOURCES FROM AOPA

### Check Out the AOPA Job Board for New Opportunities in O&P

If you need a position filled at your business or are interested in looking at other job possibilities within the O&P field, check out the [AOPA Online Job Board](#). The online job board sports a freshly updated look and an easy-to-navigate profile creation system.

In the past month the Job Board has been viewed over 8,000 times by more than 1,500 unique users. If you want people to find out about a job opening at your facility or are interested in posting your resume for employers to view for potential openings, visit the [AOPA Online Job Board](#) today.

And remember: if you advertise on the Online Job Board and decide to also advertise in the *O&P Almanac*, then you'll receive a 5 percent discount on the cost of advertising in the *Almanac* and on the Job Board.

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at [srybicki@AOPAnet.org](mailto:srybicki@AOPAnet.org) or (571) 431-0835.

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## The 2011 Audio Conference Series from AOPA

Numerous offices have benefited from their participation in **AOPA's** Medicare Audio Conferences. These one hour sessions come to you in the comfort of your office on the second Wednesday of each month at 1:00 pm Eastern. This series provides an outstanding opportunity for you and your staff to stay abreast of the latest hot topics in O&P, as well as gain clarification and ask questions on topics that you may not understand as fully as you would like to.

Seminars are still priced at just \$99 per line for members (\$199 for non-members). Buy the series and get two free; members pay just \$990 and non-members pay \$1990. If you purchase all the conferences, all conferences from months prior to your purchase of the set will be sent to you as CDs.

These convenient one hour telephone seminars are designed to fit easily into your busy schedule. Any practitioners needing credit can get 1.5 per audio conference by returning the provided quiz within 30 days and scoring at least 80%. Billing staff and others who don't need credit can nonetheless gain information they will use right away. The topics for 2011 are:

- January 12: How to Meet the New Medicare Supplier Standards (Available on CD)
- Feb. 9: Using the Lower Limb Medical Policy to Your Advantage (Available on CD)
- March 9: Enhance Your Claims Success, Two Letters at a Time (Available on CD)
- April 13: Improving Clinical Documentation (Available on CD)
- May 11: Which Box to Check? The Negative Effect of the 855S on Reimbursement (Available on CD)
- June 8: Preventing Audit Disasters (Available on CD)
- July 13: Don't Rile the OSHA Police
- August 10: How to Get Paid for Miscellaneous and Repair Codes
- September 14: Don't Run Afoul of the KO Rules
- October 12: Developing Your Medicare Billing Compliance Plan
- November 9: Happy Holidays: Kickbacks and Gifts in O&P
- December 14: Are You Ready for the New Year? 2012 New Codes and Policies

[Click here to register for any 2011 Audio Conference.](#)

If you miss an audio conference, it will be available on CD after the fact. Cost is the same as if you participate live (\$99/\$199). We hope you'll be able to join us for this year's series.

Questions? Contact Stephen Custer at [scuster@AOPAnet.org](mailto:scuster@AOPAnet.org) or (571) 431-0876.

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## O&P INSIDER'S TRACK

*The Only Up-to-the Minute O&P Newsline*

### In Memoriam

**AOPA** received the following remembrance of John Mitchell, Sr. from his colleague, Sharon Andrews, CP, LP:



We mourn the loss of a dear friend and colleague, John "Jack" A. Mitchell, Sr. who died on July 6 at Morristown Memorial Hospital, at the age of 73. Jack was a dear friend to us all at Garden State Orthopaedic, providing orthotic and prosthetic care to patients for over 26 years. Jack had worked at Kessler Associates in East Orange, NJ for 28 years before joining Garden State. Jack had great hand skills and there was nothing he couldn't make or repair, starting in this field when sockets were still carved from wood blocks. Most importantly Jack was a man who cared deeply about his patients. If there were emergency repairs or adjustments needed, Jack was there and did whatever it took to get patient's comfortable and ambulatory. A man of impeccable skills and moral commitment, Jack will be missed by all who have had the honor to come in contact with him.

**AOPA** received the following remembrance of **Kathy Spozio** from the **Amputee Coalition**:

Kathy became an amputee in 1995, losing her left leg above the knee to cancer. She soon became an ardent advocate for those with disabilities. She joined the Amputee Coalition in the late 1990s, quickly becoming a generous supporter of its activities and joining its Board of Directors. Beginning in 2001 and serving through 2008, she was Secretary of the Board. Kathy's husband, Bernie, asks that memorial contributions be made to the Amputee Coalition and encourages those wishing to remember Kathy to read more about her life and post their thoughts on [her memorial site](#).

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## People in the News

[Össur](#) announced the promotion of **Amanda Miller** to the position of Director of Sales, Prosthetics and Government Accounts. Previously, Ms. Miller served as the company's Director of National Accounts and New Business Development.

Producer/Director Daria Price of [Out On a Limb](#), a documentary about advances in the science of prosthetics, has launched a crowd-funding campaign via the website Indiegogo.com to raise funds for post production expenses to finish the film. [Click here to contribute](#).

[WillowWood](#) announced the hiring of **Wayne Fichtel, CP** as its national account manager.

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## Businesses in the News

[OPAF](#) & The First Clinics announced its annual search for individuals who would like to serve on the OPAF Board of Directors. Board members may serve either a one, two or three year term and are required to attend at least one of the two face to face board meetings held in conjunction with the AOPA and Academy national meetings. Additionally, directors are expected to be vitally involved in the ongoing work of OPAF & First Clinics with adaptive sports and recreation and to take an active role with our fundraising efforts. Nominees are needed at this time for at least three and up to five seats on the Board of Directors. [Click here for more information and all nomination materials and instructions](#).

The [American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics & Pedorthics, Inc.](#) (ABC), donated \$10,000 to the [Amputee Coalition](#)'s Bridge to Ability Fund in memory of Todd Anderson, CP, FAAOP.. This donation was designated toward scholarships provided to new amputees to attend the national conference in Kansas City, Missouri. Additionally, the [Amputee Coalition](#) announced a partnership with [CaringBridge](#). CaringBridge provides free Web sites that connect people experiencing a significant health challenge to family and friends, making each health journey easier.

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## Send Us Your News!

The next **AOPA** *in Advance* will arrive in your inbox on July 26. So if you have a new employee or a new office, tell us! Share your news with the over 15,000 readers of the *O&P Almanac* and **AOPA** *In Advance* newsletter. Contact Steven Rybicki at [srybicki@AOPAnet.org](mailto:srybicki@AOPAnet.org)  
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